



## A MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF OF STAFF



### Greetings Retired Soldiers, Surviving Spouses and Families,

This edition of *Army Echoes* coincides with our Army's Birthday. In mid-June, we turn 235 years old. And, we remain the best in the world at what we do — despite the stress and strain of fighting the longest war in the history of the All-Volunteer Force.

Recently, we surpassed the combined duration of World War I, World War II, and Korea. In that time, almost 5,500 men and women have given their lives and over 37,000 others have been Wounded in Action. It's because of men and women like these — and the more than 13,000 Soldiers who have been decorated for valor since 9/11 — that the American people can go about their daily lives, prosper and thrive.

Our Soldiers, Families and Army Civilians carry on your unsurpassed legacy of excellence. You led the Army that led our Nation through the wars in Europe and the Pacific, Korea and Vietnam, and transitioned us to an All-Volunteer Force. You built the Army that won the Cold War, and you continue to inspire the Army that, today, is leading this country in our war against violent extremism.

When this war began in 2001, we had a great Army. But, it was an Army designed to fight large armored battles on the plains of Europe or in the deserts of Saudi Arabia. It was too small to do what the Nation asked us to do. And so, we found ourselves out of balance - so weighed down by our commitments in Iraq and Afghanistan that we couldn't do the things that we knew we needed to do to sustain this All-Volunteer Force for the long haul and to build the capability to do other things.

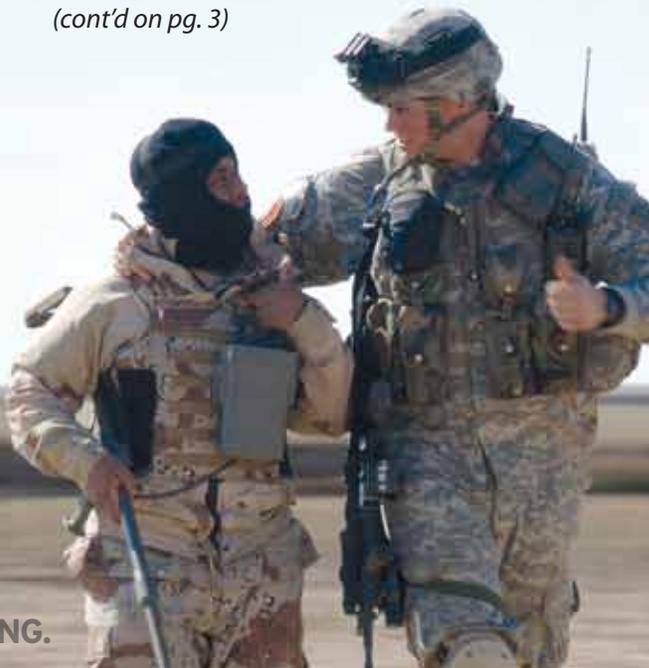
So, for the past three years, we have been aggressively executing a program to **sustain** our Soldiers and Families — the heart and soul of the force; to **prepare** our Soldiers for success in the current conflict; to **reset** them effectively when they returned; and to continue to **transform** for an uncertain future — in order to restore balance and increase our strategic flexibility.

We have been making tremendous progress, but we're not out of the woods yet.

To sustain our Soldiers and Families, the most important thing we are working on right now is to increase the time that they spend at home between deployments. To do that, we have had to do two things. We have increased the size of the Army. We have also reduced demand; that's what we're doing now with the drawdown in Iraq.

We are also working on building resilience in the force and reducing the stigma associated with seeking assistance for mental health. To do so, we are expanding and institutionalizing Comprehensive Soldier Fitness — our effort to

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STILL PROUD.

STILL SERVING.

STILL SALUTING.



# ECHOES

## A Message from the Chief, Army Retirement Services

### Greetings Retired Soldiers, Surviving Spouses and Family Members,

“And the Army keeps rolling along...” How true that old phrase is. We at Army Retirement Services continue to be fully engaged in our important missions of helping Soldiers and Family members preparing to retire; assisting those of you who are retired as well as your Families; and working the Survivor Benefit Plan program for survivors of both Soldiers who die on active duty, as well as those who passed on after they retired. As you will note from several of the articles in this edition of *Echoes*, the Army continues to operate at a very high tempo.

Laura Paul has done a superb job of passing onto you the highlights of the 50th meeting of the Chief of Staff, Army Retiree Council in her article. As many of you know, this annual April meeting is our biggest single event of the year. Once again, the 14-member council did an outstanding job of representing you and insuring that virtually all significant issues raised by your installation retiree councils were briefed and understood by all in attendance. A variety of high level speakers walked us through their program highlights pertaining to issues that impact our Soldier/Retired Soldier populations. All provided superb updates to the council membership. Ultimately this information is presented to the Chief of Staff of the Army to help insure he is aware of the most pressing concerns of the nearly one million Retired Soldiers, “gray area” Retirees, and Surviving Spouses.

Particularly noteworthy were the opening comments of LTG Bostick, Army G-1. LTG Bostick is our new Army G-1, and was making his first visit to the council as the opening speaker for the 5-day event. In addition to covering a wide variety of important personnel issues, he really hit a Home Run with all of us when he told the audience about the first time he talked with an Army Retiree. When he was finishing high school he was interested in attending the United States Military Academy at West Point. His Dad was a Master Sergeant and the Bostick Family had moved around a great deal. As he explored the various ways of applying for admission to West Point, he became aware of the rigorous nomination process for anyone who wants to enter USMA. A Retired Sergeant Major told him that because his Dad was a Master Sergeant, he qualified for a Presidential appointment as the son of a career Army Soldier. Because of the personal interest of the Retired Sergeant Major, and his love of the Army, young Thomas Bostick followed up and took the necessary steps to make the application, was

admitted to West Point, and graduated four years later. LTG Bostick spoke about how this Retired Soldier made this great difference in his life all those years ago! I would suggest that you too can be a key influencer to the young men and women in your community. Many of you have done the same thing — that is speaking up for our Army by promoting the overwhelming number of opportunities that exist for the young men and women of this Nation who step forward to join our Army. **You may never know how you have changed the life of some young person, or how your support in your community with currently serving Soldiers or their Families is making a difference today. Stay active; continue (or begin) to be one of the “key influencers” in your community. Lives may be changed because of YOU!**

As is true each year, the CSA Retiree Council bade farewell to departing members. COL(R) Alan Phillips (Army of Europe), CSM(R) Frank Minosky (Ft. Hood), and SGM(R) Cliff Lovett (Ft. Leavenworth) all finished their distinguished service to your CSA Retiree Council. Each made significant and lasting contributions to our Army, and I am honored to count them as friends. They are true professionals who love their Army! They will be missed.

I believe this edition of *Echoes* is particularly good, and covers a wide range of very important topics. GEN Casey’s article is instructive and inspirational as he presents the big picture outlook on our history and traditions, and how “our Soldiers, Families, and Army Civilians carry on your unsurpassed legacy of excellence”. Please read his article carefully, especially his last paragraph as he thanks you for your “continued service and sacrifice for our Army and our Nation.” I also invite your attention to our TRICARE articles (page 16) as they relate to the recently passed National Health Care Act. Once again, health care was the #1 agenda item in the CSA Retiree Council’s report to GEN Casey.

As you faithful readers know, I always close my message by returning to the heart and soul of our Army: our Soldiers! In those quiet moments of your day remember to say a prayer for our troops, their Families, our most senior leaders, and our great Nation. Our greatest communication tool is not the latest electronic device in our hands—instead it’s our folded hands, and our heart and head bowed in prayer! It is my honor to serve you! Keep chargin!

John W. Radke  
Chief, Army Retirement Services  
COL, USA Retired

## A Message from the Chief of Staff *(from pg. 1)*

increase readiness and enhance performance by providing our Soldiers, Families and Civilians with the skills they need in this era of persistent conflict.

And, we are focusing on our obligations to our Wounded Warriors and their Families, and to our Survivors. We established the Warrior Transition Command and reorganized our Warrior Transition Brigades to provide better support, rehabilitation, and individualized transition planning to our recovering Warriors. And — together with the Department of Veterans Affairs — we are working to improve transition services and processes for our Veterans.

Similarly, we have expanded our Survivor Outreach Services, connecting with more than 26,000 Survivors to date.

As we draw down in Iraq and shift our main effort to Afghanistan, we know that the continued support of our Retirees, Surviving Spouses and Families will be vital to our success. We are engaged in a long-term ideological conflict,

and — while we know that we will prevail militarily — we recognize that any successful strategy requires long-term commitment, patience and national will.

Throughout our 235-year history, our Army has been the strength of this Nation, and that strength has come from our people. There is no greater resource for our Army today than each of you. I encourage you to reconnect with today's Soldiers, Families and Army Civilians because they follow in your footsteps. They have much to learn from your example, and they are worthy heirs to your legacy of service and achievement. Thank you for your continued service and sacrifice for our Army and for our Nation.



*George W. Casey, Jr.*  
General, United States Army  
Chief of Staff

## Bases Get New Names in Realignment

**WASHINGTON (AFPS)** – Some military installations are consolidating and getting new names as joint basing becomes a reality.

**As a result of the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure Commission's directive to consolidate 26 stateside military installations into 12 joint bases, seven bases received new names in January:**

- Ft. Lewis and McChord Air Force Base, WA, became Joint Base Lewis-McChord, led by the Army
- The Navy's Anacostia Annex and Bolling Air Force Base, Washington, DC, became Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling, led by the Navy
- Naval Station Pearl Harbor and Hickam Air Force Base, HI, became Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, led by the Navy
- Charleston Air Force Base and Naval Weapons Station Charleston, SC, became Joint Base Charleston, led by the Air Force
- Elmendorf Air Force Base and Ft. Richardson, AK, became Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, led by the Air Force

- Lackland and Randolph Air Force Bases and Ft. Sam Houston, TX, became Joint Base San Antonio, led by the Air Force
- Langley Air Force Base and Ft. Eustis, VA, became Joint Base Langley-Eustis, led by the Air Force

**Five others became joint bases in October when:**

- Naval Amphibious Base Little Creek and Ft. Story, VA, became Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Ft. Story, led by the Navy
- Ft. Myer and the Marine Corps' Henderson Hall, VA, became Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall, led by the Army
- Andrews Air Force Base and Naval Air Facility Washington, MD, became Joint Base Andrews, led by the Air Force
- McGuire Air Force Base, Ft. Dix and Naval Air Engineering Station Lakehurst, NJ, became Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, led by the Air Force
- Navy Base Guam and Andersen Air Force Base in Guam became Joint Region Marianas, led by the Navy



## Chief of Staff's Retiree Council Calls Health Care Highest Priority

☆ **Health care continues to be the highest priority issue** for both current and future Retired Soldiers, according to the Chief of Staff, Army, (CSA) Retiree Council. The Council marked its 50th meeting, Apr 26-30, 2010, in the Pentagon.

The Council, chaired by LTG (Ret.) Frederick Vollrath and SMA (Ret.) Jack Tilley, is made up of seven Retired officers and seven Retired noncommissioned officers. Council



SMA Kenneth Preston briefs the CSA Retiree Council.

members represent Retired Soldiers and Families worldwide. At their annual meeting, they reviewed 32 issues submitted by installation Retiree councils, nine of them dealing with health care.

☆ **Health care**

In its report to the CSA, the Council praised ongoing health care initiatives including preventive health care, case management, quality outcomes and consistent communication, saying they would enhance health care for all Retirees and their Families. These initiatives were briefed by Army Surgeon General LTG Eric Schoomaker and TRICARE Deputy Director Navy RADM Christine Hunter. Briefings from DoD, Army and other leaders, along with pre-meeting research are the tools the Council uses when preparing its report.

Stating that attempts to reduce the level of benefits of the Military Health Care System raise concerns that the earned entitlement will be eroded based strictly on budgetary constraints, the Council made the following health care recommendations:

- **Sustain the viability of the military health care program** by fully resourcing DoD health programs.
- If TRICARE fees must be increased, limit any increase in those fees to the annual future rate of growth in retired pay, with special consideration to not overburdening Retired NCOs, E-7 and below.
- **Raise the TRICARE provider reimbursement levels** to create the physician network needed to make care accessible for all beneficiaries.

- Support legislation to authorize pretax payment of TRICARE Prime enrollment fees and premiums for TRICARE supplemental, long-term care, and TRICARE Retiree Dental Insurance.
- **Provide Retirees with a choice of eyeglass frames** through a self-funded voluntary Optical Insurance Plan similar to the Retiree Dental Insurance Program. Retirees have long advocated a low-cost option that allows them more choices than the standard brown Army frames currently available at Medical Treatment Facilities.
- **Encourage use of the TRICARE Mail Order Pharmacy** by eliminating copayments for generic and chronic care drugs.
- Continue to support ongoing efforts between DoD and the VA to improve the compatibility of the two health care systems and preserve the benefits for all beneficiary groups.

☆ **Communication, retirement services, education**

Council members reported that they appreciate the ongoing efforts of IMCOM Commander LTG Rick Lynch and his deputy BG Al Aycock in supporting standardized Retirement Services Officer positions as well as periodic RSO training and Notary Public certification, both issues which had been raised by the Council.

The Council also applauded the ongoing initiatives to provide Reserve Component Soldiers with an informative and positive transition into retirement, which were briefed by LTG Jack Stultz, Chief, Army Reserve and by BG Timothy Kadavy, Deputy Director, Army National Guard, who highlighted the National Guard's significant accomplishments in all aspects of retirement processing and counseling. The Council also stated that current and future Retired Soldiers remain the most credible ambassadors of our Army.



G-1 LTG Thomas Bostick talks to the CSA Retiree Council.

Help the Army tell its story. **Please see page 15** — this pullout page gives you facts you can use to talk about our Army.

## ☆ The Council recommended that the Army:

- **Increase the understanding of Soldiers and their spouses of their entitlements and benefits throughout their careers.** The Council recommended adding retirement modules to courses for mid-grade and senior grade officers and NCOs and to courses preparing Soldiers for command. They suggested that spouses receive similar instruction in Family Readiness Groups and through Army Community Services.
- **Continue to fund three hardcopy issues a year of *Army Echoes*,** the bulletin for Retired Soldiers and Families, while encouraging, but not forcing, recipients to switch from the paper to the e-mail copy.
- **Enhance retirement services available to retiring and Retired Soldiers by raising the level of funding** for Pre-Transition Services and Post-Transition Services for all installations/garrisons worldwide. Ensure that fiscal requirements are part of the annual budget process and that funding for Retirement Services, including Retiree Appreciation Days, is protected in the budget.
- **Through IMCOM, complete the establishment of RSO positions** in accordance with the already approved IMCOM Standard Garrison Organization at the target grade by the end of FY10 or the completion of the established contracted service support.
- **Complete the establishment of Retirement Services Offices** at major Army Reserve and Army National Guard commands to ensure all retiring and Retired Army Reserve and National Guard Soldiers, their Families and survivors are properly informed about retirement-related benefits and entitlements.
- **Support a test program** under which Retired Soldiers who are supported by APOs in Germany would be allowed to send and receive parcels weighing up to five pounds, to quantify the impact on postal workload, service and costs.
- **Recognize the contributions of Surviving Spouses by authorizing space-available air travel.**  
As a lower priority category than active duty Soldiers, Surviving Spouses would not burden the stand-by system.



## ☆ Benefits

The Council stated that they appreciate the significant amount of work that the Defense Finance and Accounting Service accomplished during the conversion from contractor to in-house workforce, focusing on best practices to support and serve customers.

In the area of benefits, the Council recommended that the Army:

- **Take care of Surviving Spouses** by supporting efforts to eliminate the Dependency and Indemnity Compensation offset to the Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) annuity.
- **Recognize the extraordinary service and sacrifice** of Army Reserve and Army National Guard Soldiers by including mobilization periods in support of contingency operations on or after Sept. 11, 2001 when determining the eligibility date for retired pay (instead of the current effective date of Jan. 28, 2008) and by providing medical benefits concurrently with the start of retired pay.
- **Support efforts to provide full concurrent receipt of military retired pay** and disability compensation to all eligible military Retirees regardless of disability rating or years of service.
- **Support the DFAS initiative to forgive any overpayment of retired pay** for any period after the date of death of a Retiree through the last day of the month in which death occurs.
- **Acknowledge their long-term commitment** to the Army by issuing eligible Surviving Spouses an indefinite ID card at age 65.

Because the CSA has been travelling around the world in support of troops, the Council Co-Chairs reported the meeting results to him May 25th and plan to meet with him again in October.



# ECHOES

## Army National Guard Supports Its Retiring and Retired Soldiers and Families

By MAJ Dale A. Krueger,  
Army Retirement Services  
National Guard Liason Officer

Most Army National Guard Soldiers know that if you serve twenty years, you qualify for retired pay at age 60. However, many Guard Soldiers can find retiring a confusing process. To better support its retiring and Retired Soldiers and Families, the Army National Guard is working to make the process smoother. Following are the Guard's recent major accomplishments in this mission:

First, the Army National Guard has worked with the Department of the Army in updating the AR-600-8-7, the Army Retirement Services Regulation. This updated policy now includes the first ever chapter covering Army Guard Retirements to help Army personnel understand and handle not only Army retirements but also Army National Guard and Army Reserve retirements.

Second, the Army National Guard has developed an *Army National Guard Information Guide on Non-Regular Retirements*. This guide is designed to help anyone interested in how a member of the Army National Guard can earn retirement points, qualify for retired pay for non-regular service, and apply for retired pay.

Third, the Army National Guard is providing its retiring Soldiers the Army Retiring Soldier Commendation Packet. Soldiers receive the packets, which include a U.S. Flag and the Army Retiree Pin, when they notify their State Guard personnel of their retirement.

Finally, the Army National Guard held its first ever Retirement Workshop in Savannah, GA, from Mar. 1-5, 2010. This training, attended by 185 Army personnel, focused on providing State personnel information on

updates to the laws, policies, and procedures for preparing Soldiers for retirement. It also included certification of 175 personnel on the Survivor Benefit Plan and the Reserve Component Survivor Benefit Plan. In attendance from the States were the Retirement Services Officers, Retirement Points Account Managers, and Active Guard Reserve Managers.

Looking to the future, the Army National Guard is enhancing its efforts to insure that our retiring Soldiers get the best support possible. A new conference is being planned with the goal of making retirement a seamless process for the ARNG Retiree and Family. While challenges remain, the Army National Guard is making strides in caring for all its retiring Soldiers, Retired Soldiers and Families.

### Go Guard!



## Upgrading Retirement Services for Reserve Soldiers and Families

By LTC Robert L. Hagan,  
Army Retirement Services Reserve Liaison Officer

Together, the Army G-1, Retirement Services Office, and the Army Reserve, have made great strides in improving retirement services to retiring and Retired Reserve Soldiers and their Families, including "gray area" Retired Soldiers, those not yet age 60 and not yet receiving retired pay. The goal is to upgrade the retirement services these Soldiers and Families receive via mail and the Human Resources Command St. Louis Call Center to more closely resemble the personal retirement counseling installation Retirement Services Officers provide to Soldiers and Families retiring from the Active Army.

The first step in accomplishing this goal was to appoint a Reserve liaison officer to the Army Retirement Services team. Working through the Army Family Action Plan, Army Retirement Services and the Reserve are striving to create a Regional network of Reserve Retirement Services Officers.

One major milestone was achieved in February 2009 when the first *Army Reserve Non-Regular Retirement Guide* was published and posted in the new Reserve and National Guard Retirement section of the Army Retirement Services homepage [www.armyg1.army.mil/rso/rngr.asp](http://www.armyg1.army.mil/rso/rngr.asp).

A second milestone involved the National Guard, the Reserve, and Army Retirement Services working together as the Army National Guard held the very first Reserve Component Survivor Benefit Plan (RC-SBP) training workshop in March 2010, with key Army Reserve personnel attending the training.

A third milestone was the inclusion of Reserve Soldiers in the Army Retiring Soldier Commendation Program. The Reserve provided funding so that retiring Reserve Soldiers could receive the same U.S. flag, Retired Soldier pin and commendation packet that retiring Active Army Soldiers receive.

A fourth milestone resulted from the training workshop. The RC-SBP training is being incorporated into the Army Reserve Readiness Training Center's Unit Administrator Basic Course (UABC) taught at Ft. McCoy, WI. The UABC course trains 500 to 600 UAs annually. Army Reserve Soldiers and their Families will have a local point of contact to go to when they have questions about RCSBP, upon receipt of their twenty year letter or when applying for retired pay. Installation RSO training will now include RC-SBP, and these RSOs will be given the tools to assist Reserve Soldiers.

A fifth milestone will be the publication of the revised Army Retirement Services regulation AR 600-8-7 later this year with new chapters added on Reserve retirement and Guard retirement.

## A 'Peak' Vacation Experience For Retirees

Nestled at the foot of sweeping alpine vistas, Edelweiss Lodge and Resort is a mountain haven just 56 miles from Munich. Edelweiss Lodge and Resort offers military Retirees exclusive European Escapes vacation packages throughout the year.

These ten-night packages include transportation to and from the airport, a welcome reception, guided tours, breakfast, a farewell reception and special gifts. Highlights may include Neuschwanstein Castle, Berchtesgaden, Innsbruck, Munich, Rothenburg, Herrenchiemsee, and Garmisch-Partenkirchen.

Edelweiss also features amenities such as the outdoor hot tub, pool or massage therapy as well as three restaurants featuring regional cuisine and all-American favorites.

The edelweiss flower is a symbol of prestige but is also revered for its medicinal healing abilities, symbolizing the role the Edelweiss Lodge and Resort plays in providing rest and relaxation to Retirees and their Families. For information regarding these Retiree vacation packages, please visit [www.edelweisslodgeandresort.com/european\\_escapes.html](http://www.edelweisslodgeandresort.com/european_escapes.html) for details.

Reservation Information:  
From Europe: (00-49) 08821-9440  
From CONUS: (011-49) 8821-9440  
Monday – Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. CET  
Email: [vacation@edelweisslodgeandresort.com](mailto:vacation@edelweisslodgeandresort.com)  
Or book online at [www.edelweisslodgeandresort.com](http://www.edelweisslodgeandresort.com)



# ECHOES

## DFAS to Resume VSI/SSB Recoupment

**CLEVELAND** – Recoupment of military Retirees' Voluntary Separation Incentive (VSI), Special Separation Benefit (SSB) and other separation payments by the Defense Finance and Accounting Service will resume in August 2010.

VSI, SSB and certain other separation payments, such as severance pay, were offered to active duty military members in an effort to reduce manpower in certain career fields, primarily during the 1990s. Because federal law prohibits military members from receiving both separation and retirement payments for the same period of service, provisions of these programs included repayment should an individual join the Ready Reserve or return to active duty and earn status as a military Retiree.

On June 1, 2009, in response to Retirees' concerns, DFAS temporarily stopped deducting these repayments from retirement pay while DoD conducted a formal review of the recoupment program. Prior to the review, the federal statutes governing these programs did not allow DoD or DFAS to alter repayment rates or provide alternative repayment plans regardless of the financial hardships a Retiree may have been experiencing.

The DoD review is complete, and Congress has amended Sections 1174(h) and 1175(e) of Title 10, United States Code, to help limit the financial strain on military Retirees as they repay their outstanding balances. The new statutes allow DFAS more flexibility to accommodate for financial hardship and modify repayment plans. As a result, DFAS has reduced the maximum recoupment rate from 90 percent to 40 percent. DFAS also will consider more lenient repayment plans for Retirees who are experiencing financial hardships.

Affected Retirees will receive notification letters at least 90 days before recoupments resume. If they feel the rates of recoupment will create financial hardships, they may request more lenient repayment plans by providing financial information on the Financial Statement of Debtor forms enclosed with the notification letters.

This monthly recoupment may also affect former spouses who receive Uniformed Services Former Spouse Protection Act payments from such Retirees. Former spouses affected by this recoupment also will receive a notification letter prior to the resumption of recoupments.



## - Secure, Immediate Link to Your Account

**INDIANAPOLIS** – When the Defense Finance and Accounting Service first launched the myPay Web-based pay account system in 2000, less than 500,000 military, military Retirees, annuitants and federal civilian employees were listed as online users. Today that number includes 3.7 million users with access to pay account information, tax statements and the ability to update their bank, personal and allotment information instantly and, most importantly, securely.

Recently, DFAS implemented a myPay security enhancement requiring users to establish new login credentials, including personalized login IDs and passwords. The agency posted step-by-step instructions in both text and video at the myPay site (<https://mypay.dfas.mil/mypay.aspx>) and its public website ([www.dfas.mil](http://www.dfas.mil)) to help customers set up their new information.

Users of myPay have greater control over their pay accounts and can make changes to vital information in a very secure environment. Some of the options within myPay include:

- Download, save and print pay account information from military Retired or annuitant account statements, or military/federal employee leave and earning statements.

- Download, save and print annual tax statements such as W-2s and 1099Rs.
- Verify and update postal and e-mail addresses.
- Verify and update bank account information for direct deposit.
- Start, change or stop financial allotments.
- Make changes to federal or state tax withholding amounts.
- Change user names and passwords to keep accounts secure.

While the options may vary from one customer category to another, all myPay users can establish alternate login credentials for use by Family members, tax preparers or others they trust to view account information and download tax statements.

While DFAS maintains some of the more traditional methods of submitting changes to customer information or inquiring about pay issues such as fax, call centers and mail, the myPay system provides a faster and more efficient means to communicate with their payroll service provider.

## RETIREE APPRECIATION DAYS

Retiree Appreciation Days (RADs) are designed with you in mind. They're a great source of the latest information for Retirees and Family members in your area. RADs vary from installation to installation, but, in general, they provide an opportunity to renew acquaintances, listen to guest speakers, renew ID Cards, get medical checkups and access various other services. Some RADs include special events such as dinners or golf tournaments. For more information, contact the Retirement Services Officer (RSO) sponsoring the RAD.

### UPCOMING RADs

Ft McPherson, GA	Jun 19	(404) 464-3219
Presidio of Monterey, CA	Jun 19	(831) 242-5976
Concord, NH	Jul 31	(603) 495-3042
Tobyhanna Army Depot, PA	Aug 7	(570) 351-5309
Des Moines, IA	Aug 19	(515) 283-7013
Rosemount, MN	Aug 27	(763) 566-2219
Camp Ripley, MN	Aug 28	(763) 441-2630
Ft McCoy, WI	Sep 10	(608) 388-3716
Twin Ports/Duluth, MN	Sep 10	(218) 722-0071
Ft Leonard Wood, MO	Sep 10-11	(573) 596-0131
Ft Drum, NY	Sep 11	(800) 556-9790
Ft Sill, OK	Sep 16-18	(580) 442-2645
Ft Bragg, NC	Sep 17-18	(910) 396-8591
Selfridge, MI	Sep 18	(586) 239-5580
Ft Lee, VA	Sep 25	(804) 734-6555
Ft Belvoir, VA	Sep 25	(703) 805-3682
Ft Bliss, TX	Sep 25	(915) 568-5204
Ft Meade, MD	Oct 1	(301) 677-9603
Redstone Arsenal, AL	Oct 1-2	(256) 876-2022
Ft Hamilton, NY	Oct 2	(718) 630-4552
Ft Monroe, VA	Oct 14	(757) 788-2093
Carlisle Barracks, PA	Oct 16	(717) 245-4501
Ft Carson, CO	Oct 16	(719) 526-2840
Ft Monmouth, NJ	Oct 16	(732) 532-4673
Aberdeen Prv Grd, MD	Oct 16	(410) 306-2320
Heidelberg, Germany	Oct 16	06221-57-8399
Grafenwohr, Germany	Oct 22	09641-83-8814
Schweinfurt, Germany	Oct 23	09721-96-8812
Ft Polk, LA	Oct 23	(337) 531-0363
Wiesbaden, Germany	Oct 26	0611-705-7668
Vicenza, Italy	Oct 28	0444-51-7405
Ft Rucker, AL	Oct 29	(334) 255-9124
Ft Hood, TX	Oct 29-30	(254) 287-8100
Ft Knox, KY	Oct 29-30	(502) 624-1765
Ft Leavenworth	Oct 30	(913) 684-2425
Ft Campbell, KY	Oct 30	(270) 798-5280
Rock Island, IL	Oct 30	(563) 322-4823
Benelux	Oct 30	0032-65-44-4575
Ft Benning	Nov 5	(706) 545-1805
Ft Richardson, AK	Nov 6	(907) 384-3500
Ft Huachuca, AZ	Nov 6	(520) 533-5733

## No TRICARE Hike in 2011 Budget Request

**WASHINGTON (AFPS)** – TRICARE recipients will see no increase in their premiums next year, if Congress approves that provision of the fiscal 2011 defense budget request, as expected. However, Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates said he wants to work with Congress to find ways to help control escalating military health care costs that are consuming an ever-increasing chunk of the budget.

Noting the skyrocketing costs of the military healthcare system – from \$19 billion in 2001 to \$50.7 billion in the fiscal 2011 budget request — Gates questioned how sustainable the program can remain without cost controls or higher premiums. “It’s only going to go up,” he said, with Military Health System officials estimating 5 to 7 percent annual cost increases through fiscal 2015. “And it is absorbing an increasing percentage of our budget.” Officials predict that the program will grow from 6 percent of the defense budget to more than 10 percent by fiscal 2015.

“We absolutely want to take care of our men and women in uniform and our Retirees,” Gates said, “But at some point, there has to be some reasonable tradeoff between reasonable cost increases or premium increases or co-pays or something and the cost of the program.”

There’s been no TRICARE premium increase since the program was founded in 1995, Gates said, noting that Congress rejected recent Pentagon proposals for increases. Expecting the same action, the Defense Department recommended no increase this year, he said.

“I ask anybody to point me to a health insurance program that has not had a premium increase in 15 years,” Gates said. TRICARE benefits, he said, are “generous, as they should be for our men and women in uniform.”

But Gates compared the \$1,200 average out-of-pocket costs for a Family of three under TRICARE to about \$3,300 for the same Family under a health maintenance organization plan in the Federal Employees Health Care Program.

The Military Health System has 9.5 million eligible beneficiaries, including active-duty military members and their Families, military Retirees and their Families, dependent survivors and certain reserve-component members and their Families.



# ECHOES

## TRICARE Program for 'Gray Area' Reserve Retirees on Its Way

**FALLS CHURCH, VA** - A new program will offer "gray area" Reservists the opportunity to purchase TRICARE health care coverage. While qualified members of the Selected Reserve may purchase premium-based coverage under TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS), Retired National Guard and Reserve personnel did not have TRICARE health coverage options until they reached age 60. Under a provision of the National Defense Authorization Act for 2010, that will change.

The new provision will allow certain members of the Retired Reserve who are not yet age 60 (gray area Retirees), to purchase TRICARE Standard and Extra coverage. TRICARE Extra simply means beneficiaries have lower out of pocket costs if they use a network provider.

"We're working hard to coordinate all the details of eligibility, coverage and costs, and expedite implementation of this important program," said RADM Christine Hunter, Deputy Director of the TRICARE Management Activity. "This is a major benefit program with implementation on the same magnitude as TRS. It will require detailed design, development and testing, but

**qualified Retired Reservists should be able to purchase coverage by late summer or early fall of 2010."**

While the health care benefit provided for gray area Retirees will be TRICARE Standard and Extra – similar to TRS – the new program will differ from TRS in its qualifications, premiums, copayment rates and catastrophic cap requirements. The program is tentatively called TRICARE Retired Reserve.

The new statute requires premium rates to equal the full cost of the coverage. That is the major difference contrasted with TRS, where the statute provides that Selected Reserve members pay only 28 percent of the cost of the coverage. Premiums for the new gray area Retiree program will be announced after program rules are published in the Federal Register.

This new program offers an important health coverage option for Reserve and National Guard members who served their country honorably before hanging up their uniforms at retirement, said Hunter. For more information about TRICARE benefits go to [www.tricare.mil](http://www.tricare.mil).

## News Briefs

### Will Congress Cut Medicare Reimbursement Rates?

Will Congress cut Medicare reimbursement rates and, if so, when will they do it? Congress has delayed a 21.2 percent reduction in Medicare reimbursement rates three times. As we go to press, the effective date has been moved to June 1; however, Congress could vote to delay the cuts beyond that. How will this affect TRICARE for Life? If Congress sets a date and Medicare declares new reimbursement rates, TRICARE will take 30 to 60 days to change business systems to align, as required by law, with the new Medicare rates. We will report the latest news in the next issue of *Army Echoes* and on the current news section of our homepage at [www.armyg1.army.mil/rso/docs/currentnews.pdf](http://www.armyg1.army.mil/rso/docs/currentnews.pdf).

### Taking SSNs off ID Cards

We reported a year ago that the Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC) was in the process of eliminating Social Security Numbers (SSN) from all ID cards. This initiative has been put on hold, pending further review. For Retirees, this means that your Social Security will remain on your ID card and your dependents' ID cards. As soon as this situation changes, we will report it in *Army Echoes* and in the Current News section of our homepage [www.armyg1.army.mil/rso/docs/currentnews.pdf](http://www.armyg1.army.mil/rso/docs/currentnews.pdf).



Retired Army decal and pin: Can be purchased at the Retiree corner of your nearest AAFES stores or online at [www.aafes.com](http://www.aafes.com), click on "Exchange Online Mall"; choose "USPT Gear"; then choose "Retired Gear". You must log in first.

## How to Change Your Address

*Echoes* is mailed using correspondence addresses supplied by:

- ☆ **For those in receipt of retired pay or an annuity** – DFAS – Cleveland, OH
- ☆ **For those who will begin to receive retired pay at age 60** – the Army Human Resources Command (HRC) – St. Louis, MO

You must use the contact information provided in the boxes below to make address changes. If you write or FAX your address change, you must include your Social Security number on every page and you must sign your address change request.

**Mobilization:** For mobilization purposes, ALL Retired Soldiers should report address and phone number changes as well as changes in your ability to serve (physical condition) to HRC – St. Louis using the contact info below.

*Note: The Army Echoes Editor cannot make address changes!*

## VA Increasing Prescription Costs

An increase in Veterans out-of-pocket payments for VA pharmaceuticals is scheduled for July 1, 2010, after being delayed in January.

The \$1 increase will bring to \$9 the copayments facing Veterans for each 30-day supply of medicine for the treatment of conditions not related to military service. The yearly maximum out-of-pocket payment for pharmaceuticals for non-service-related conditions is scheduled to increase to \$1,080.

There are no copayments associated with the treatment of conditions related to military service. The cap will not apply to Veterans in priority groups seven and eight.

## Update Your Retired Pay File Information

**If in receipt of or entitled to retired pay, mail to:**

Defense Finance and Accounting Service  
U.S. Military Retired Pay  
PO Box 7130  
London, KY 40742-7130  
Phone: 1-800-321-1080 or  
(216) 522-5955; FAX: 1-800-469-6559  
(put SSN on all pages)

**Remember:** You are responsible for updating your retired pay file information at DFAS-CL, using the KY mailing address below, within one year of the event if you marry, remarry, have a child, are widowed or divorced and need to make or update a Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) election.

**If in receipt of or entitled to SBP/RSFPP annuity, mail to:**

Defense Finance and Accounting Service  
U.S. Military Annuitant Pay  
PO Box 7131  
London, KY 40742-7131  
Phone: 1-800-321-1080 or  
(216) 522-5955; FAX: 1-800-982-8459  
(put SSN on all pages)

**If a Retired Reservist not yet 60, mail to:**

U.S. Army Human Resources Command –  
St. Louis  
ATTN: AHRC-PAP-A  
1 Reserve Way  
St. Louis, MO 63132-5200  
Phone: 1-800-318-5298 or  
(314) 592-0554; FAX: (314) 592-0582  
(ATTN: TLM9V49) (put SSN on all pages)

## Not Updating Retired Pay Records Can Cost Benefits

**Too often, we hear about survivors who were denied benefits because the Retired Soldier did not update retired pay records after getting married, divorced, remarried, being widowed or gaining a child.**

We hear from Surviving Spouses who did not receive the retired pay for the days of the last month the Retired Soldier was alive because this money went to the person the Soldier had chosen at retirement.

We hear from former spouses who lost Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) benefits because neither the former spouse nor the Retired Soldier notified DFAS within a year of the court order that awarded former spouse SBP.

We also hear from spouses of Retirees, married after retirement, who assumed they had SBP coverage. However, if the Retiree did not take the required action within one year of marriage, the spouse may have no SBP coverage.

To make sure your spouse (or former spouse) is prepared, keep a file with information that will be needed when you die. Make sure your spouse (or former spouse) knows what benefits to expect or not to expect.

**Keep this article as a reminder to update your retired pay records if your status changes.**



# ECHOES

## VA Recognizes 'Presumptive' Illnesses in Iraq, Afghanistan

**WASHINGTON** – Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki has announced that the VA is taking steps to make it easier for Veterans to obtain disability compensation for certain diseases associated with service in the Persian Gulf War or Afghanistan.

The VA published a proposed regulation in the Federal Register Mar. 18, 2010 to establish new presumptions of service connection for nine specific infectious diseases associated with military service in Southwest Asia during the Persian Gulf War, or in Afghanistan on or after Sept. 19, 2001. Once the final regulation is published, we will announce it in *Echoes* and on our homepage. The proposed rule includes

information about the long-term health effects potentially associated with the nine diseases: Brucellosis, *Campylobacter jejuni*, *Coxiella burnetii* (Q fever), malaria, *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*, Nontyphoid *Salmonella*, *Shigella*, Visceral leishmaniasis and West Nile virus.

For non-presumptive conditions, a Veteran must provide medical evidence to establish an actual connection between military service in Southwest Asia or in Afghanistan, and a specific disease. With the proposed rule, a Veteran will only have to show service in Southwest Asia or Afghanistan, and a current diagnosis of one of the nine diseases.

Because the Persian Gulf War has not officially been declared ended, Veterans serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom are eligible for VA's new presumptions. Secretary Shinseki decided to include Afghanistan Veterans in these presumptions because NAS found that the nine diseases are prevalent in that country.

For more information about health problems associated with military service during operations Desert Shield, Desert Storm, Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom and related VA programs go to [www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/gulfwar/](http://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/gulfwar/) or go to [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov) for information about disability compensation.

## VA Proposes Change to Aid Veterans Exposed to Agent Orange

**WASHINGTON** – More than 100,000 Veterans exposed to herbicides while serving in Vietnam and other areas will have an easier path to qualify for disability pay under a proposed regulation published by the VA that adds three new illnesses to the list of health problems found to be related to Agent Orange and other herbicide exposures. The illnesses are B cell leukemias, such as hairy cell leukemia; Parkinson's disease; and ischemic heart disease.

VA encourages Vietnam Veterans with any of these three diseases to submit their applications for compensation now so the VA can begin development of their claims and so they can receive benefits from the date of their applications once the rule becomes final.

More than 80,000 of the Veterans will have their past claims reviewed and may be eligible for retroactive payment, and all who are not currently eligible for

enrollment into the VA healthcare system will become eligible.

The new rule will bring the number of illnesses presumed to be associated with herbicide exposure to 14 and significantly expand the current leukemia definition to include a much broader range of leukemias beyond chronic lymphocytic leukemia previously recognized by VA.

Veterans who served in Vietnam during the war and who have a "presumed" illness don't have to prove an association between their illnesses and their military service. This "presumption" simplifies and speeds up the application process for benefits.

Other illnesses previously recognized under VA's "presumption" rule as being caused by exposure to herbicides during the Vietnam War are:

- AL Amyloidosis
- Acute and Subacute Transient Peripheral Neuropathy
- Chloracne or other Acneform Disease consistent with Chloracne
- Chronic Lymphocytic Leukemia (now being expanded)
- Diabetes Mellitus (Type 2)
- Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma
- Porphyria Cutanea Tarda
- Prostate Cancer
- Respiratory Cancers (Cancer of the lung, bronchus, larynx, or trachea)
- Soft Tissue Sarcoma (other than Osteosarcoma, Chondrosarcoma, Kaposi's sarcoma, or Mesothelioma)

More Information is available at [www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/agentorange](http://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/agentorange).

Do you have questions on benefits, SBP, Retiree Appreciation Days or anything else retirement-related? Then contact the RSO for your area or go to the Army Retirement Services website <http://www.army1.army.mil/retire> (Note: That's the number 1 after the g).

## State/Territory RSOs

(states/territories without Army installations list the RSO serving that area)

### ALABAMA

• Redstone Arsenal  
(256) 876-2022  
cynthia.anderson1@redstone.army.mil  
• Ft Rucker  
(334) 255-9124  
ruck.retirees@conus.army.mil

### ALASKA

• Ft Richardson  
1-800-478-7384  
(AK only)  
(907) 384-3500  
rso@richardson.army.mil  
• Ft Wainwright  
(907) 353-2102  
fwarso@wainwright.army.mil

### ARIZONA

• Ft Huachuca  
(520) 533-5733  
FtHuachucaRSO@hua.army.mil

### ARKANSAS

Ft Sill, OK

### CALIFORNIA

Presidio of Monterey  
1-877-354-2634  
pres-dhr-rso@conus.army.mil

### COLORADO

Ft Carson  
(719) 526-2840  
retirement-services@carson.army.mil

### CONNECTICUT

West Point, NY

### DELAWARE

Ft Meade, MD

### D.C.

Ft Myer, VA

### FLORIDA

• Central & West  
MacDill AFB  
(813) 828-0163  
army.rso@macdill.af.mil  
• Rest of FL  
Ft Stewart, GA

### GEORGIA

• Ft Benning  
(706) 545-1805  
benn.g1hrd.rso@benning.army.mil  
• Ft Gordon  
(706) 791-2654  
tim.a.wilson@us.army.mil

• Ft McPherson  
(404) 464-3219  
rso.mcpherson-A@conus.army.mil  
• Ft Stewart  
(912) 767-5013  
rso@stewart.army.mil

### HAWAII

Schofield Barracks  
(808) 655-1514  
rso@schofield.army.mil

### IDAHO

Ft Carson, CO, or  
Ft Lewis, WA

### ILLINOIS

Ft L. Wood, MO; Ft  
McCoy, WI; Ft Knox, KY

### INDIANA

Ft Knox, KY

### IOWA

Ft McCoy, WI

### KANSAS

• Ft Leavenworth  
(913) 684-2425  
Leav-RSO@conus.army.mil  
• Ft Riley  
(785) 239-3320  
rso@riley.army.mil

### KENTUCKY

• Ft Campbell  
(270) 798-5280  
camp.retire@conus.army.mil  
• Ft Knox  
(502) 624-1765  
knox.rso@conus.army.mil

### LOUISIANA

Ft Polk  
(337) 531-0363  
polk\_rso@conus.army.mil

### MAINE

Ft Drum, NY

### MARYLAND

• Aberdeen Pr. Grd.  
(410) 306-2320  
imneapghr@conus.army.mil  
• Ft Meade  
(301) 677-9603  
mderso@conus.army.mil

### MASSACHUSETTS

West Point, NY

### MICHIGAN

• Ft McCoy, WI  
• Lower MI Selfridge  
ANGB  
(586) 239-5580 (or  
Ft McCoy)

### MINNESOTA

Ft McCoy, WI

### MISSISSIPPI

Ft Rucker, AL

### MISSOURI

Ft Leonard Wood  
(573) 596-0947  
leon.agretsvcs@conus.army.mil

### MONTANA

Ft Lewis, WA

### NEBRASKA

Ft Riley, KS

### NEVADA

Presidio of Monterey,  
CA

### NEW HAMP.

Ft Drum, NY

### NEW JERSEY

• ASA Dix  
(609) 562-2666  
rsodix@conus.army.mil  
• Ft Monmouth  
(732) 532-4673  
jacqueline.moura@us.army.mil

### NEW MEXICO

Ft Bliss, TX

### NEW YORK

• Ft Drum  
(315) 772-6434  
drum.rso@conus.army.mil  
• Ft Hamilton  
(718) 630-4552  
hamilton.rso@conus.army.mil  
• Watervliet-Wed/Thurs  
(518) 266-5810  
wvarso@gmail.com  
• West Point  
(845) 938-4217  
rso@usma.army.mil

### NO. CAROLINA

Ft Bragg  
(910) 396-5304  
braggrso@conus.army.mil

### NO. DAKOTA

Ft Riley, KS

### OHIO

Ft Knox, KY

### OKLAHOMA

Ft Sill  
(580) 442-2645  
rso.sill@conus.army.mil

### OREGON

Ft Lewis, WA

### PENNSYLVANIA

• Carlisle Barracks  
(717) 245-4501  
carl\_rso@conus.army.mil  
• Tobyhanna Army  
Depot (Tues/Wed/  
Thurs)  
(570) 615-7409  
danielle.dematteo@us.army.mil

### RHODE ISLAND

West Point, NY

### SO. CAROLINA

Ft Jackson  
(803) 751-6715  
FJrso@conus.army.mil

### SO. DAKOTA

Ft Riley, KS

### TENNESSEE

Ft Campbell, KY

### TEXAS

• Ft Bliss  
(915) 568-5204  
BlissRSO@conus.army.mil  
• Ft Hood  
(254) 287-5210  
hood.dhr.iag.retsvcs@conus.army.mil  
• Ft Sam Houston  
(210) 221-9004  
rso@samhouston.army.mil

### UTAH

Ft Carson, CO

### VERMONT

Ft Drum, NY

### VIRGINIA

• Ft Belvoir  
(703) 805-2675  
gwendolyn.lott@conus.army.mil  
• Ft Eustis  
(757) 878-3648  
eustis.rso@conus.army.mil  
• Ft Lee  
(804) 734-6555  
leeearso@conus.army.mil  
• Ft Monroe  
(757) 788-2093  
monr.fmretsvcoff@conus.army.mil  
• Ft Myer  
(703) 696-5948  
fmmc-rso@conus.army.mil

### W. VIRGINIA

Ft Knox, KY

### WASHINGTON

Joint Base Lewis-McChord  
(253) 966-5884  
lewisrso@conus.army.mil

### WISCONSIN

Ft McCoy  
1-800-452-0923  
bill.g.walters@us.army.mil

### WYOMING

Ft Carson, CO

### PUERTO RICO

Ft Buchanan  
(787) 707-3842  
santiago.santiago@conus.army.mil

## Overseas RSOs

### Europe

06202-80-6029  
RSOAE@eur.army.mil

### Germany

#### Ansbach

0981-183-3301  
RSOAnsbach@eur.army.mil

#### Bamberg

0951-300-9181  
RSOBamberg@eur.army.mil

### Baumholder

06783-6-6080  
RSOBaumholder@eur.army.mil

### Grafenwoehr

09641-83-8814  
IMAE-GRAF.RSO@eur.army.mil

### Heidelberg

06221-57-8399  
RSOHD@eur.army.mil

### Kaiserslautern

0631-411-7333  
RSOKL@eur.army.mil

### Mannheim

0621-730-3371  
RSOMA@eur.army.mil

### Schweinfurt

09721-96-8812  
RSO.Schweinfurt@eur.army.mil

### Stuttgart

07031-15-3442  
usag-s.rso@eur.army.mil

### Wiesbaden

0611-705-5338  
RSOWiesbaden@eur.army.mil

### Belgium

0032-65-44-6238  
RSO.usagbenelux@eur.army.mil

### England

see Kaiserslautern  
**Italy/So. Europe/  
Africa/Mid-East**

### Vicenza

0444-71-7262  
RSOVicenza@eur.army.mil

### Netherlands

0031-46-443-7320  
RSO.Schinnen@eur.army.mil

### Japan

046-407-3940  
RSO@zama.army.mil

### Okinawa

06117-44-4186  
RSO@okinawa.army.mil

### Korea

0505-730-4133  
RSO@korea.army.mil

## Guard And Reserve RSO

Human Resources Command, St. Louis, MO, office serving all Guard and Reserve Retired Soldiers and their Families  
1-800-318-5298 ext 4 • (314) 592-0123 • sheila.dorsey@us.army.mil or stephen.welch@us.army.mil

**Army Retirement Services:** <http://www.armyg1.army.mil/retire>

**Army Echoes:** <http://www.armyg1.army.mil/rso/echoes.asp>

**Address Change:** See boxes on pg. 11. DON'T send to Echoes.

**Armed Forces Retirement Home:** 1-800-422-9988; 3700 N Capitol St, NW; Washington, DC 20011-8400; <http://www.afrh.gov>

**Army & Air Force Exchange Service:** <http://www.aafes.com>

**Army Career & Alumni Program:** <http://www.acap.army.mil>

**Army Emergency Relief:** 1-866-878-6378; (703) 428-0000; <http://www.aerhq.org>

**Army Homepage:** <http://www.army.mil>

**Army Knowledge Online:** <https://www.us.army.mil>

**Combat-Related Special Compensation:** 1-866-281-3254; <http://www.cpsc.army.mil>; FAX -877-368-9208 (or 703-325-2956)

**Concurrent Retirement & Disability Payment:** 1-800-321-1080, <http://www.dfas.mil>, under "Retired Pay"

**Death – Report a Retired Soldier's Death:** Call local Installation Casualty Assistance Office or HQDA Casualty Operations Center, 1-800-626-3317; from overseas, call (703)325-7990 collect. <https://www.hrc.army.mil/site/active/tagd/cmaoc/cmaoc.htm>

**Arlington National Cemetery:** (703) 607-8585; <http://www.arlingtoncemetery.org>

**DEERS:** 1-800-538-9552; (831) 583-2500  
ID card records update in case of death or divorce: Contact nearest ID card facility: <http://www.dmdc.osd.mil/rsl/owa/home>

**Defense Commissary Agency:** <http://www.commissaries.com>

**Dental Plan:** 1-888-838-8737; <http://www.TRDP.org>

**Gulf War Homepage:** <http://www.gulfink.osd.mil>

**Health Beneficiary Counseling Assistance Coordinator:** <http://www.tricare.mil/bcacdcao>, or contact nearest military medical facility.

**Records – Replace DD Form 214, awards:** <http://vetrecs.archives.gov>  
National Personnel Records Center (Military Personnel Records); 9700 Page Ave.; St. Louis, MO 63132-5100



**Retired Army decal and pin:** Can be purchased at the Retiree corner of your nearest AAFES stores or online at <http://www.aafes.com>, click on "Exchange Online Mall", choose USPT Gear, then choose Retired gear. You will need to log on.

**Space-available travel:** <http://www.amc.af.mil/amctravel/index.asp>

**Pay/SBP Inquiries** <http://www.dfas.mil>

**Pay inquiries and update of pay or SBP records in case of death, divorce or remarriage:**

**Retiree** Defense Finance and Accounting Service; U.S. Military Retirement Pay; PO Box 7130; London, KY 40742-7130  
1-800-321-1080, (216) 522-5955

**SBP/RSFPP annuitant** Defense Finance and Accounting Service; U.S. Military Annuitant Pay; PO Box 7131; London, KY 40742-7131 1-800-321-1080; (216) 522-5955

**Pay Center FAX numbers:** (Retiree) 1-800-469-6559; (216) 522-5955 (SBP/RSFPP annuitant) 1-800-982-8459

**Online account access:** <https://mypay.dfas.mil>

**Online contact info (includes e-mail link):** <http://www.dfas.mil/Retiredpay/contactus.html>

**myPay customer service:** 1-888-DFAS411 or 1-888-332-7411, Commercial 216-522-5096, or DSN 580-5096.

**Social Security** <http://www.ssa.gov>; 1-800-772-1213

(If overseas, contact the American Embassy/consulate, or go to <http://www.ssa.gov/foreign/phones.html> or FAX 410-597-1800.)  
**Medicare** <http://www.medicare.gov>; 1-800-633-4227

**Reserve** <https://www.hrc.army.mil/site/reserve>  
(requires Army Knowledge Online login)

**Reserve Benefits:** 1-800-318-5298; (314) 592-0553

**Application for Reserve Retired Pay:** (You should receive packet at age 58.) Army Human Resources Command-St. Louis; ATTN: AHRC-PAP-T; 1 Reserve Way; St Louis, MO 63132-5200

**Retiree Mobilization:** Army Human Resources Command-St. Louis; ATTN: AHRC-PLM-O; 1 Reserve Way; St Louis, MO 63132-5200; (314) 592-0000, ext. 3030

**VA** <http://www.va.gov>

**Regional Offices:** 1-800-827-1000 (Retirees overseas should contact the American Embassy/consulate); TDD (Telecomm. Device for Deaf) 1-800-829-4833

**Insurance:** VA Regional Office and Insurance Center; PO Box 7208 (claims inquiries); PO Box 7327 (loans); PO Box 7787 (payments); Philadelphia, PA 19101; 1-800-669-8477

**Health Care Benefits:** 1-877-222-8387

**Grave Information:** 1-800-697-6947

**GI Bill:** 1-888-442-4551

**TRICARE Information** <http://www.tricare.mil>

**TRICARE North:** 1-877-TRICARE; <https://www.hnfs.net/bene/home>; CT, DC, DE, IL, IN, KY, MA, MD, ME, MI, NC, NH, NJ, NY, OH, PA, RI, VT, VA, WI, WV, some ZIPs in IA, MO, TN

**TRICARE South:** 1-800-444-5445; <http://www.humanamilitary.com/home.htm>; AL, AR, FL, GA, LA, MS, OK, SC, TN (except 35 TN ZIP codes near Ft Campbell), and TX (except the extreme SW El Paso area)

**TRICARE West:** 1-888-TRIWEST; <https://www.triwest.com/triwest/default.html>; AK, AZ, CA, CO, HI, ID, IA (except 82 Iowa ZIP codes near Rock Island, IL) KS, MO (except the St. Louis area), MN, MT, ND, NE, NM, NV, OR, SD, SW TX, UT, WA, WY

**TRICARE Overseas:** 1-888-777-8343; <http://www.tricare.mil/overseas/index.cfm>

**TRICARE for Life:** 1-866-773-0404; (TDD for hearing impaired 1-866-773-0405); <http://www.tricare.mil/tfl/default.cfm>

**TRICARE Mail Order Pharmacy:** 1-866-363-8667; <http://www.tricare.mil/pharmacy/tmop.cfm>

**TRICARE Retail Pharmacy:** 1-866-363-8779; <http://www.express-scripts.com>.  
Email: [tricare\\_help@otsg.amedd.army.mil](mailto:tricare_help@otsg.amedd.army.mil)

**Recreation Centers** <http://www.armymwr.com>

**Cape Henry Inn and Beach Club:** (757) 422-8818, FAX: (757) 422-6397 <http://www.capehenryinn.com>

**Hale Koa Hotel, Hawaii:** (808) 955-9424, 1-800-367-6027; FAX1-800-425-3329) <http://halekoa.com>

**Eidelweiss Resort, Bavaria:** 011-49-8821-9440; FAX 011-49-8821-944-4135 <http://www.edelweisslodgeandresort.com>

**Shades of Green, FL:** (888) 593-2242; (407) 824-3665 <http://www.shadesofgreen.org/reservations.htm>

**Dragon Hill, Korea:** 011-822-790-0016; FAX 011-822-790-1576; [reservations@dhl.korea.army.mil](mailto:reservations@dhl.korea.army.mil)

**Sister Service Retiree Publications**

**Air Force Afterburner:** <http://www.Retirees.af.mil/afterburner/>

**Coast Guard Evening Colors:** <http://www.uscg.mil/ppc/retnews/>

**Marine Corps Semper Fi:** <https://www.manpower.usmc.mil>, then click on "Semper Fidelis Online" under "News and Features"

**Navy Shift Colors:** <http://www.npc.navy.mil/ReferenceLibrary/Publications>

- In Fiscal Year 2009, Soldiers completed 1,469 Associate Degrees, 1,591 Baccalaureate Degrees and 962 Graduate Degrees.
- The Army spent a total of \$219.5M on higher education tuition assistance in Fiscal Year 2009.

### Did You Know?

An All-Volunteer Team Sustaining an All-Volunteer Army — A Mutually Supporting Relationship with Families & Communities Enabled by a Network of Shared Knowledge Using Leading Edge Technologies & Premier Recruiting Practices.

### USAREC Vision Statement - "America's Army Starts Here"

- **Transformation**  
Pinnacle Implementation and the Human Resources Center of Excellence - Developing and integrating best practices in recruiting to move us forward into the future, constantly improving our organization and embracing transformation as a way of life.
- **Communicate and enforce standards**  
Standards must be clearly communicated and enforced at every level of the command. Adherence to standards is the hallmark of a quality organization. As the Army's trusted ambassadors to the American public, recruiters must be disciplined and adhere to the Army Values and Warrior Ethos at all times.
- **Discipline with Army Values**  
The quality of life of USAREC Soldiers, Civilians and Families is every bit as important as the annual recruiting mission. We take care of our people; they take care of the mission and our Team becomes stronger.
- **Quality of life**  
None of us can do this alone. Teamwork is key to continued success.
- **The command will succeed or fail as a Team.**

### USAREC Commanding General's Enduring Priorities

### AAC Public Affairs Guidance on Don't Ask/Don't Tell

We do not address sexual orientation when recruiting Soldiers so we anticipate no impact on Army accessions at this time. Our goals remain unchanged, to recruit the best qualified to serve our Army. Current policy remains the same until the law is changed.

While the commander in chief has made a renewed call to repeal the Department of Defense's 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' policy, he has also stated that the military must not ignore the law that now governs that policy.

One of the seven Army values is respect and it is expected that all Soldiers treat each other with dignity and respect.

### Puerto Rico Birth Certificates

A new law to become effective July 1 will invalidate all birth certificates issued before that date by the Puerto Rico Health Department, through its Vital Statistics Records Office. Until that date, all birth certificates will remain valid.

On July 1, the Vital Statistics Record Office will begin issuing new birth certificates incorporating state-of-the-art technology to limit the possibility of document forgery. As it currently stands anyone scheduled to ship on or after July 1, will have to have the new certificate. USAREC G3 is advising that all members of the DEP/DTP have a DD 372 submitted so their enlistment (ship) date is not affected. Reference USAREC Msg 10-108.

### U.S. Army Recruiting Command on Facebook

U.S. Army Recruiting (USAREC) now has a Facebook page available to everyone at the below address. This is a great tool to keep up with news, resources, events and information about all things related to Army recruiting. Check it out, and become a fan at: [www.facebook.com/USAREC](http://www.facebook.com/USAREC).

Produced by the USAREC G7/9 Public Affairs Division - April 7, 2010

These key messages are provided to help Recruiting Command personnel respond to questions from the general public and the news media. For current key messages and additional talking points, go to the G7/9 Page on the USAREC Intranet Portal or call (502) 626-0167/0164. This product is also available online at [www.supportrecruiting.army.mil](http://www.supportrecruiting.army.mil).

According to the National Voter Registration Act, Armed Forces recruiting stations will be locations where all U.S. citizens may obtain and fill out voter registration applications. Citizens may elect to take the application home to be filled out or accomplish the task in the RS with assistance from RS personnel. In addition, all prospects will be asked during the initial face-to-face interview if they are registered to vote. (Reference USAREC Msg 10-094.)

### National Voter Registration Act

The Regular Army First enlistment option allows non-prior service applicants to enlist in the active Army for three years plus training and then complete the remainder of their eight-year service obligation in the Army Reserve or National Guard. (NOTE: This program was suspended in June 2009, but reinstated in April 2010.)

### Regular Army First enlistment option (REINSTATED)

There is a \$1,000 bonus for qualified non-prior service applicants who enlist for an eligible MOS with the Airborne training option. This bonus may be combined with other incentives. This bonus was introduced in April 2010.

### Airborne Bonus (NEW)

- Enlistment bonuses totaling up to \$40,000 for an enlistment of 4 or more years
- Up to \$65,000 to repay qualifying student loans
- Up to \$4,500 a year in tuition assistance while serving
- Enlistment bonuses totaling up to \$20,000
- Mobilization stabilization while in college (ECS)
- Up to \$40,000 to repay qualifying student loans
- Up to \$4,500 a year in tuition assistance while serving

### Army Reserve

### Active Army Enlistment Benefits

## U.S. Army Recruiting Command

**Fiscal Year 2010 Missions:** Active Army 74,500; Army Reserve 17,000 (reduced from 20,000 in Apr FY10)

**March 2010 Mission Accomplishments:** We recruited (accessed) 6,615 Soldiers for the active Army against a monthly goal of 6,389 (103.5%) and 1,898 Soldiers for the Army Reserve against a goal of 1,714 (110.7%).

**Fiscal Year 2010 Accomplishments:** As of 26 March 2010, we have recruited (accessed) 36,129 Soldiers for the active Army against a year to date goal of 35,290 (102.4%) and 10,999 Soldiers for the Army Reserve against a goal of 9,360 (117.5%).

### Key Messages

- Recruiting success continues in FY 10, but the Army and the nation still face challenges as we recruit for the All Volunteer Force.
- We are recruiting during a period of persistent conflict.
- We have seen increased youth propensity to enlist; however, parents have concerns about risk.
- Historically, an increase in unemployment has resulted in an increase in Army enlistments.
- Fewer than 3 of 10 17-24 year old youth are fully qualified.
- One in five youth fail to graduate high school.
- Increased obesity rates among our nation's youth — one in five youth 12-19 years old currently overweight, compared to 1 in 20 in the 1960s. Projected to grow to 1 in 4 by 2015.
- Public support to Soldiers remains strong. However, need more Americans to:
- Step forward and serve.
- Support a youth's decision to join the Army.
- Not just an Army challenge — A challenge for the nation... How can you help?

## Tear Off This Page

Why? On the back side of this page, we have printed Army key issues which can be folded twice to produce a small, four-page STRATCOM tool that you can carry in your pocket or pocketbook. Our new G-1, LTG Thomas P. Bostick, former Commanding General of the Army's Recruiting Command, suggested that Retired Soldiers could use these key

messages when you talk about the Army with your friends and neighbors and particularly when you talk about the Army to young people considering becoming part of our Army. You can find the latest key messages under "talking points" at: [www.supportrecruiting.army.mil/resources.htm](http://www.supportrecruiting.army.mil/resources.htm).



Army Retirement Services  
ATTN: DAPE-HR-RSO  
Alexandria VA 22332-0470  
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## TRICARE, VA Care Safe under Health Care Reform

You've probably read and heard quite a bit about the National Health Care Reform Act. What you may not have seen in the news is whether the new law will affect your ability to get health care through TRICARE or the VA. **It will not.**

The TRICARE Affirmation Act became law Apr. 26, 2010 to "reinforce that military health care coverage will not be adversely affected by the health reform law," according to a House Armed Services Committee news release. The release further states that TRICARE meets the minimum requirements for individual health insurance in the recently enacted health care bill, and no TRICARE beneficiary will be required to purchase additional coverage beyond what they already have.

VA Secretary Shinseki issued a statement to reassure Veterans as Congress was voting on the legislation, saying, "Fears that Veterans health care and TRICARE will be undermined by the health reform legislation are unfounded. I am confident that the legislation being voted on today will provide the protections afforded our nation's Veterans and the health care they have earned through their service."

